Disengagement Operations: Context, Violence, and Spoilers in a New Phase IV Construct

A Monograph

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The U.S. Armed Forces has a long and rich history of expeditionary operations followed by military disengagements. For the U.S. Armed Forces to remain responsive to global demands in the future, its leaders must understand military disengagement operations so that they can successfully extricate scarce combat power from global operations as quickly as strategically and operationally practicable. Much of the debate on this topic occurs under the moniker "Phase IV" operations. Using this term reflects the ambiguity that exists in contemporary understanding of post conflict operations. Disengagement operations is a definable construct that can fill the gap in military understanding and planning of operation that follow major combat engagements because it is likely to be the only constant in all future "Phase IV" operations. This monograph posits that military organizations can effectively disengage from unconventional wars when they use an appreciation of the operational context to understand how to create and makes use of lulls in violence, and manage spoilers. As such, this monograph provides a survey of disengagement operations, their relevance to future U.S. conflict, and how operational level leaders can influence them through appreciating operational context, violence and spoilers.

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Abstract

DISENGAGEMENT OPERATIONS: VIOLENCE, SPOILERS, AND CONTEXT IN A NEW POST-CONFLICT CONSTRUCT by MAJ Theodore W. Kleisner II, US ARMY, 56 pages.

The U.S. Armed Forces has a long and rich history of expeditionary operations followed by military disengagements. A historically small U.S. military is repeating this history today in two wars that are stretching it to the limits of its personnel and materiel capacity. Concurrently, senior leaders predict a future where the military will grow slowly while its global requirements will persist. Thus, for the U.S. Armed Forces to remain responsive to global demands in the future, its leaders must understand military disengagement operations so that they can successfully extricate scarce combat power from global operations as quickly as strategically and operationally practicable.

Much of the debate on this topic occurs under the moniker "Phase IV" operations. This term has its roots in doctrinal references that depict Phase III as major military operations, and all Phases thereafter depict some lesser expenditure of military effort and significance. Using this term reflects the ambiguity that exists in contemporary understanding of post conflict operations. Other similar terms such as "winning the peace" or "operations after the campaign" reflect similar ambiguity, the latter further revealing the inability of today's military to fit disengagement operations into a broad campaign context.

Disengagement operations is a definable construct that can fill the gap in military understanding and planning of operation that follow major combat engagements because it is likely to be the only constant in all future "Phase IV" operations. Understanding disengagement therefore may become the best way to lure military leader away from their predilection towards Phase III and lack of preparedness for what follows. Anticipating disengagement operations compels these leaders to consider the ends, ways, and means necessary to return forces to their pre-conflict strategic posture before they become engaged in war.

Furthermore, anticipating disengagement compels these leaders to conceptualize the ways, and means to create space for disengagement. This monograph posits that military organizations can effectively disengage from unconventional wars when they use an appreciation of the operational context to understand how to create and makes use of lulls in violence, and manage spoilers. As such, this monograph provides a survey of disengagement operations, their relevance to future U.S. conflict, and how operational level leaders can influence them through appreciating operational context, violence and spoilers.

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Introduction

Discussions on the topic of disengagement have ranged from war termination theory, redeployment operations, transition operations, to the contemporary concept of stability operations, to name a few. These various topics tend to distill post-conflict operations to acute subjects that address critical but incomplete aspects of the post conflict environment. Other debates on the subject, such as the debate surrounding the umbrella term "Phase IV" operations cloud the topic in ambiguity. Military disengagement, as defined in this paper, provides a more definitive view of the post-conflict environment by describing it as a continuum of conflict designed to uncouple an intervening force from the conflict and return it to a posture conducive to its national strategic interests.

Military disengagement operations hold particular significance for U.S. forces today because a historically small U.S. military is conducting two wars that are stretching it to the limits of its personnel and materiel capacity. Concurrently, senior leaders predict a future of marginal military growth but increasing global demand. The Armed Forces cannot meet the demands of this future if they are unnecessarily bogged down in ongoing conflicts or engagements. Thus, for the U.S. Armed Forces to remain responsive to global demand in the future, its leaders must understand military disengagement operations so that they can successfully extricate scarce combat power from global operations as quickly as strategically and operationally practicable. Once extricated, combat power can recover and resume a posture conducive to global deterrence or deployment – the military disengagement construct serves as the way to conduct this extrication.

This monograph therefore offers U.S. military leaders, particularly at the operational level of war, a deeper understanding of military disengagement by addressing the question: how can military leaders formulate effective disengagement campaigns in the future?

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This monograph posits that military organizations can effectively disengage from unconventional wars when they use an appreciation of the operational context to understand how to create and make use of lulls in violence, and manage spoilers. It offers two case studies that describe the correlation between these aspects and successful or unsuccessful disengagements and how these aspects interrelate. Additionally, this monograph will demonstrate how these aspects are readily applicable to leaders at the operational, even tactical level of war.

This paper will first describe the current state of debate on disengagement operations, its relevance to contemporary U.S. forces, and define disengagement operations. The monograph then goes into an in depth survey of disengagement as influenced by operational context, lulls in violence, and spoiler management. The monograph then tests the thesis in two cases, U.S. involvement in Panama and Somalia to draw out issues of importance to the military reader.

What is Military Disengagement and Why is it Important?

Introduction

United States military history contains numerous cases of military disengagement operations. Examples span from the disengagement of Federal forces from the South after the Civil War in 1877 to the disengagement of peacekeeping forces from Somalia in 1994. Examples include ongoing but incomplete military disengagements in Korea, the Balkans, and Sinai, to name a few. Despite its rich experience, military history and contemporary analysis treat the topic of military disengagement operations as ancillary to broader military topics.[1] The topic deserves its own singular analysis, conducted within its proper strategic context, but unpacked from the strategic issues that cloud this aspect of the operational art.

Attempts to find a comprehensive treatment of disengagement in literature and doctrine reveals a multitude of diverging concepts of disengagement. These concepts span all levels of

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[1] Appendix A demonstrates the indirect treatment of disengagement through a broad survey of literature and doctrine on the topic.

warfare. The concepts of war termination and exit strategy typically subsume military disengagement in analyses at the strategic level of war. Military disengagement at the operational level of war comes cloaked under monikers such as theater redeployment, retrograde operations, and transition. Tactically, the military terms of retreat and withdraw best proximate the act of military disengagement but not its relevance as an operational or strategic issue. Additionally, writing on military disengagement covers several temporal contexts, e.g., the Cold War and post-Cold War; situational contexts, e.g., Israel-Palestine and U.S.-Iraq; and functional contexts, i.e., arms control treaties. Considering the amorphous nature of the subject, a definition of military disengagement conducive to this research project requires a review of this doctrine and literature.[2]

Before this monograph can test its thesis, it must first develop a definition of military disengagement relevant to U.S. security practitioners. However, this definition must account for the contemporary state of warfare and its future for U.S. forces. What follows is an analysis of the relevance of military disengagement to future U.S. military operations, a review of literature and doctrine related to the subject of military disengagement, and a definition of the term. This will then allow the monograph to analyze the impact of operational context, violence, and spoilers on disengagement operations.

Disengagement in Contemporary and Future U.S. Military Operations

The ancillary treatment of military disengagement in literature and doctrine belies its relevance to contemporary and future military operations. The U.S. military in particular would benefit significantly from a greater understanding and ability to conduct successful

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[2] See Appendix A

disengagement campaigns because it is expeditionary, engaged in two wars, small, and faces and era of "persistent conflict."[3]

The U.S. military conducted its first expeditionary operation in 1775 when Brigadier General Richard Montgomery and Colonel Benedict Arnold led the Continental Army's invasion of Canada. Since 1775, the U.S. has conducted the preponderance of its military operations on foreign soil. However, an assessment of the U.S. military posture reveals limited cases in which expeditionary forces remain militarily engaged – Korea and Western Europe being the largest exceptions – at levels that significantly influence global military posture. U.S. military expeditions have disengaged from overseas operations more often than not. The *2009 Capstone Concept for Joint Operations* contends that future warfare will require a joint force that can mount and sustain expeditions over global distances; therefore, the U.S. trend of expeditionary operations is unlikely to change in the near future.

The U.S. military has been engaged in combat operations in Afghanistan and Iraq from 2001 and 2003 respectively, and in neither case demonstrates the intention to remain engaged indefinitely. Strategies in both wars have stressed the improvement of host nation capacity to the point that U.S. forces can hand over responsibility to indigenous forces led by a capable government. Iraq facilitated this process through a Status of Forces Agreement in 2008. The U.S. faces continuous pressure from the international community concerning the dubious nature of its legal mandates to occupy either country.[4] Additionally, the President of the United States increasingly sees the human and materiel resource demands of both wars as unsustainable.[5] All of these factors make the case for the relevance of military disengagement from Operation

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[3] Peter Geren, *A Statement on the Posture of the U.S. Army 2008* (Congressional Report, Washington D.C.: Department of the Army, 2008), 2.

[4] Robert M. Gates, "Gates Calls European Mood a Danger to Peace," The New York Times, February 23, 2010; and Noam Chomsky, *Failed State* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006), 101.

[5] President Obama, Speech, "Remarks at the United States Military Academy at West Point", Daily Compilation of Presidential Documents, 2009. DCPD No. 200900962 (1 Dec 09, 2009).

ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF) and Operation IRAQI FREDDOM (OIF) and thus compel research on the topic.

The U.S. Armed Forces currently employ approximately 1.4 million service members.[6] Though it may be the second largest military in the world, it bears unprecedented responsibilities. Recent analysis has questioned the practicality of such a small force given this reality.[7] In early 2007, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates proposed to the President an increase in the overall size of the Army and Marine Corps to meet the needs of the War on Terror. Current plans are to increase the Army to 547,400 and the Marine Corps to 202,000 by 2012, both marginal increases.[8] The size of the U.S. Armed Forces, when contrasted with its anticipated future, may make the greatest case for understanding disengagement operations.

Analyses by both the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, General George Casey, and the Commanding General of the U.S. Joint Forces Command, General James Mattis, predict that the Army and the Armed Forces must anticipate "persistent conflict" and "constant engagement" respectively.[9] By this, they explicitly foresee the continued deployment of U.S. forces overseas to conduct a variety of operations. In Casey's analysis, persistent conflict reflects a propensity for violence, while Mattis posits that a balance of violent and non-violent forms of military engagement will be the case. Nonetheless, these leaders anticipate that the rate of post-Cold War military contingencies overseas will continue or increase while the U.S. Armed Forces will grow marginally.

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[6] U.S. Department of Defense, *Armed Forces Strength Figures for November 30, 2009.* http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/MILITARY/ms0.pdf (accessed January 14, 2010).

[7] Frederick Kagan, *Increasing the Size and Power of the U.S. Military.* Opportunity 08 (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institute, 2008), 2.

[8] Steven M. Kosiak, "Analysis of the FY 2009 Defense Budget Request" (Washington D.C., Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2008), 4.

[9] George Casey, *The Army of the 21st Century: A Balanced Army for a Balanced Strategy*, White Paper (Washington D.C.: Department of the Army, 11 September 2009): 2; and Department of Defense, *The Joint Operating Environment 2009: Update Challenges and Implications for the Future Joint Force.* (Norfolk: Joint Forces Command, 2009), 3.

Thus, the U.S. Armed Forces has a long and rich history of expeditionary operations followed by military disengagements. A historically small U.S. military is repeating this history today in two wars that are stretching it to the limits of its personnel and materiel capacity. Concurrently, senior leaders predict a future where the military will grow slowly while its global requirements persist. The Armed Forces cannot meet the demands of this future if they are bogged down in ongoing conflicts or engagements. Therefore, for the U.S. Armed Forces to remain responsive to global demands in the future, its leaders must understand military disengagement operations so that they can successfully extricate scarce combat power from global operations as quickly as strategically and operationally practicable. Once extricated, combat power can recover and resume a posture conducive to global deterrence or deployment – military disengagement operations serve as the way of conducting this extrication.

Military Disengagement Defined

For the sake of producing a logically sound argument, this monograph must define military disengagement. As none of the literary or doctrinal sources provides this definitively, this monograph ascertains its own from the attached review and analysis of its literature, doctrine, and relevance.[10] Military disengagement is a military operation or campaign that creates the conditions that allow military forces to resume a posture conducive to future operations and deterrence.

Military disengagement does not imply that when completed, the military plays no role in the situation that follows. On the contrary, this definition implies that the military hands off enough of its responsibilities to other entities, e.g., other government agencies, indigenous forces and governments, that it may resume its pre-conflict/contingency posture. Military operations such as foreign internal defense, advisory efforts, and foreign military sales may continue.

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[10] See Appendix A.

Additionally, military disengagement is not synonymous with retreat or withdrawal. A retreat or withdrawal seeks to save a military organization from an impending defeat or disaster after which it would likely be impossible to remain engaged in the conflict without a successful counterattack or offensive.

This definition of military disengagement lacks any context concerning the national strategic objectives of the conflict or contingency from which the military disengages. Military disengagement is the creation of the conditions conducive to and followed by the resumption of pre-conflict expeditionary posture. Whether a military disengagement meets national strategic objectives becomes the measure of the success of the operation or campaign. A successful military disengagement operation or campaign is one that meets national strategic objectives and does not compel the force to reengage.[11] These two factors form the criteria by which this monograph judges the success or failure of disengagement in its case studies.

Context, Violence, and Spoilers

Third Parties in Unconventional Wars

The purpose of this monograph is to investigate how military leaders can formulate effective disengagement campaigns in the future. Further parameters are required to enlighten military disengagement to make this investigation relevant to future U.S. military professionals. This monograph will concern itself with military disengagement of third parties from unconventional wars at the operational level of war.

The definition of military disengagement, when applied to the U.S. military profession, implies that disengaging military organizations are third party interveners for two reasons. First, recent strategic analysis does not anticipate that future military operations will take place on U.S.

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[11] These criteria for success imply that there is a relationship between military victory and disengagement. The concluding analysis of the monograph will describe this relationship in detail. See page 40-41.

soil.[12] Second, the preliminary desire to disengage logically implies that the disengaging military organization lacks a long-term stake in the conflict/contingency beyond military and stability objectives, and therefore is an outside actor in the scenario. This is particularly true on the case of the engagement of the U.S. military overseas.

This monograph assumes that future conflict will likely remain unconventional. This runs the risk of falling into the "prepare to fight the last war" trap. Arguments for future conventional state-on-state war from within or outside the U.S. offer less compelling evidence than those arguing that future wars will likely remain unconventional or hybrid wars. As David Kilcullen recently remarked, "This [irregular and unconventional warfare] is the face of future warfare. No one is going to fight us in a conventional force-on-force blitzkrieg manner unless they are really stupid, or they miscalculate."[13] Therefore, this monograph will concentrate on disengagements from unconventional wars, e.g., counterinsurgencies, stability operations, foreign internal defense, low intensity conflict, and security force assistance.

Thesis Discussion

Having defined military disengagement, this monograph posits that military organizations can effectively disengage from unconventional wars when they use an appreciation of the operational context to understand how to create and make use of lulls in violence and manage spoilers. These three aspects of military disengagement emerged from the field of international conflict management. The field of international conflict management relates to military disengagement operations because both seek to reduce conflict to a level that no longer requires management through coercive or military means and are capable of being managed through

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[12] Department of Defense, *The Joint Operating Environment 2009, 46.*

[13] David Kilcullen, "Insurgents and the Future of War" (lecture given at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, Washington D.C., November 16, 2009.).

political, economic, and social means.[14] As this section will reveal, the issues of violence and spoilers proliferate conflict management writing and offer significant military utility. Appreciating the operational context serves as the bridge for connecting military problem solving to these pivotal aspects of conflict management.

Violence and spoilers are not the only issues of concern for third parties attempting to disengage from unconventional wars. Other issues contribute to military disengagement. Building up a host-nation security apparatus offers direct support to the disengagement of third party military forces. Similarly, supporting host-nation governance contributes to disengagement by establishing the requisite political reconciliation and domestic stabilization. U.S. Army Stability Operations doctrine and other writers already adequately contribute to these topics.[15] Therefore, as topics underrepresented in military doctrine and writing, the relationships between operational contexts, lulls in violence, and spoilers serve as the focal point of this monograph.

Operational Context

Operational art is the practice of conceptualizing and executing military operations within a unique context, often across broad time and space, in such a way that their cumulative effects accomplish strategic goals.[16] Military theorists often simplify the operational art as the practice of connecting military means and ways to strategic ends. Military leaders practicing operational art must logically fit disengagement operations into the unique context of the conflict environment. They see them as operations that contribute to the accumulation of operational effects that

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[14] See web page of Unites States Agency for International Development, Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation (CCM), under *CCM-About the Office*, http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/conflict/about/index.html (accessed April 10, 2010).

[15] Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-07 Stability Operations*, Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2008, 6-10.

[16] This definition of the operational art is the author's own but is attributed in varying degree to numerous operational theorists and military doctrine. Key among these are Robert M. Citino. *Blitzkrieg to Desert Storm: The Evolution of Operational Warfare.* (Kansas University Press of Kansas, 2004); Robert M. Epstein, *Napoleon's Last Victory and the Emergence of Modern War* (Kansas : University Press of Kansas, 1994); and Brigadier Justin Kelly, *Alien: How Operational Art Devoured Strategy* (Strategic Studies Institute Monograph, Carlisle: U.S. Army War College, 2009).

accomplish strategic goals. Doing so ensures that military disengagement will be successful in three ways.

First, U.S. military organizations safeguard themselves from common pitfalls in military thought when they place disengagement into operational context. They negate the tendency to see disengagement operations through the lens of redeployment and logistics planning. Redeployment logically follows disengagement operations, but is not synonymous with disengagement. In addition, they negate the tendency to assume that military victory leads directly to disengagement and serves as its primary pre-condition.[17] The redeployment of Coalition Forces from Iraq following the Persian Gulf War offers an example of this tendency.

Second, by placing disengagement into an operational context, military organizations ensure that the disengagement becomes part of a broader campaign plan. This ensures that the practice of operational art does not end after major combat operations. Joint doctrine makes this point clear in its notional operations plan phasing versus military effort model in Joint Publication 3.0 (see figure 1). Yet examples abound of military organizations planning major combat operations but not the post conflict operations such as occupations, stability operations, or peace enforcement.[18] Both the first Persian Gulf War and Operation IRAQI FREEDOM in 2003 demonstrate this tendency to exclude disengagement from campaign planning either as a component of or in isolation from stabilization operations or support to civil authority.

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[17] Robert Mandel, *The Meaning of Military Victory* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006),16.

[18] Brian DeToy, *Turning Military Success into Victory: Military Operations After the Campaign* (Ft. Leavenworth: Combat Studies Institute, 2004), 1.
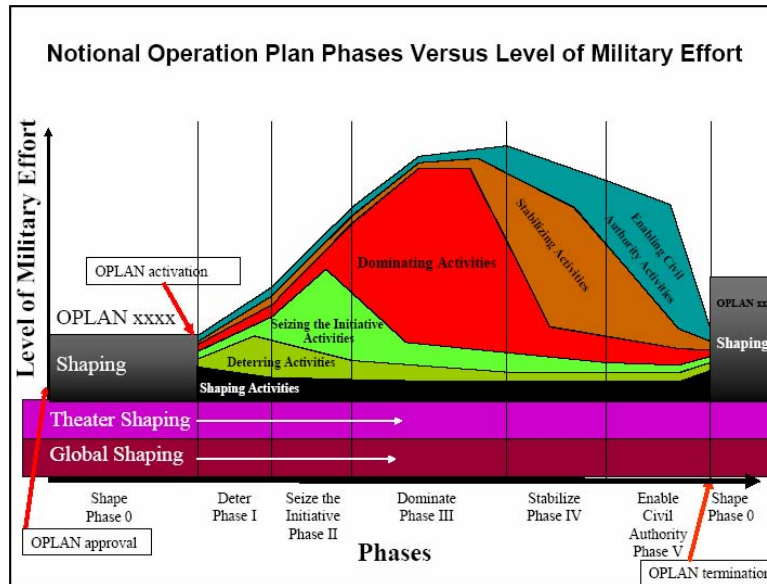
Notional Operation Plan Phases Versus Level of Military Effort

Figure 1 Notional Operation Plan Phases

Source: U.S. Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3.0 Joint Operations. September 2006. Page IV-26. Planning, Operational Art and Design, and Assessment

Third, and most importantly, planning combat operations and disengagement with an appreciation of the operational context ensures that the intervening force understands the unique aspects of the conflict environment. The appreciation of the operational environment allows the military force to anticipate the role that violence and spoilers will play in the conflict and post-conflict environment. This point demonstrates that an appreciation of the operational context plays a mediating role with relation to the aspects of violence and spoilers.

These last two points also suggest that appreciating the operational context implies that an operational context contains two components. First, its logical component focuses on how disengagement operations logically nests with other, usually preceding, operations. Second, the environmental component focuses on how the disengagement operation accommodates the unique environmental aspects of the conflict. An appreciation of both components of operational context enables a force to create and make use of lulls in violence, and manage spoilers and in doing so, formulate successful disengagement operations.

Lulls in Violence

A military organization contributes greatly to political reconciliation by creating a lull in violence. A lull in violence does not necessarily create the conditions for disengagement – the use that is made of a lull in violence matters more than the lull itself. A lull creates conditions for political accommodation that shape the disengagement environment. Military organizations can play a significant role in the actual political processes and negotiations that achieve either reconciliation or peace. However, military organizations alone may be the only organization capable of creating a lull in violence in a conflict environment. Therefore, this facet of political reconciliation belongs strictly in the military domain.

Lulls in violence facilitate political and grass-roots reconciliation efforts by breaking what Dean Pruitt and Sung Kim refer to as conflict spirals.[19] The conflict spiral theory, sometimes referred to as an interaction model, posits that escalation of conflict occurs when actors enter a cycle of action-reaction tactics that perpetuates itself to the point of intractability. Key aspects of the actors' self-perceptions and perceptions of one another, dispose each for escalatory interaction in a conflict spiral, which once begun, tends to transform the nature of the conflict. As a prerequisite to conflict management and resolution, this conflict spiral must be broken, and third party military interventions can serve as the means to break the violent manifestations of the conflict spiral.

John Paul Lederach elaborates on Pruitt and Kim's analysis by demonstrating how the lull in violence contributes to political reconciliation. He describes in *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* how reconciliation processes can only take place under conditions where participants can focus on their relationship in isolation from the outside

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[19] Sung Kim and Dean Pruitt, *Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate and Settlement* (McGraw Hill, 1994), 74.

manifestations of the conflict, such as violence.[20] Only under such conditions can a reconciliation process truly establish sustainable results.

Furthermore, William Zartman, a theorist and practitioner of conflict management, offers that ripe moments for negotiation often come from a mutually damaging stalemate, or a lull in violence that follows an escalation in violence.[21] Roy Licklider echoes this premise in *Stopping the Killing* when lulls in violence usually follow an escalation in violence.[22] This suggests that a military organization plays both active and passive roles in the termination of violence in an unconventional war in that it can deter violence through presence or it can halt violent civil wars by escalating the force of its intervention. The 2007 "surge" in Iraq demonstrates how an escalation in force size, posture, and message can create a lull in violence conducive to political reconciliation.

The role of violence in a conflict environment relates to the issue of spoilers. Though the next section will describe spoilers and their management in detail, it is necessary to explore the relationship between spoilers and violence here briefly. Some spoilers thrive in a violent conflict environment. Karen Ballentine likens some spoilers to entrepreneurs in a political economy of violence, in other words, some actors find an economic niche within a violent context and will therefore be stakeholders in continued violence and resist a lull in violence.[23] This is but one way that a shift in the level of violence creates a variety of winners and losers, some of which will choose to become spoilers or supporters of a disengagement operation that creates a lull in violence. By gaining an appreciation of the operational context, military leaders can understand

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[20] John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Society* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute for Peace, 1997), 26.

[21] William I. Zartman, *Ripe for Resolution: Conflict and Intervention in Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 8.

[22] Roy Licklider, *Stopping the Killing: How Civil Wars End* (New York: New York University Press, 1993), 38.

[23] Karen Ballentine, *Profiting from Peace: Managing the Resource Dimensions of Civil War (*Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005), 9.

how creating a lull in violence will eliminate some spoilers while creating others. Knowing this allows them to develop spoiler management strategies.

Spoiler Management

Stephen Stedman introduced the term "spoiler" into international relations and conflict management lexicon in his work "Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes" in 1997. He defines spoilers as actors within or outside a peace process "who believe that peace threatens their power, worldview, and interests, and use violence to undermine attempts to achieve it."[24] He offers a broad typology of spoilers, describing them in terms of their goals and level of commitment.

A spoiler's goals may be limited, greedy, or total. A limited spoiler obstructs the peace process to accomplish defined but partial concessions from the process, typically to guarantee its survival. A total spoiler obstructs a peace process because he/it insists on complete power and authority, and sees the peace process as a threat to this outcome. A greedy spoiler lies in the middle of the spectrum, between limited and total spoilers, and usually has limited aims, although is willing to increase them when the benefits outweigh the costs. Finally, all three types of spoilers differ in their level of commitment. Some may be committed to their goals to the point of self-destruction or they may be only willing to assume minimal risk before seeing the peace process as the means of securing the future.

Marie-Jolie Zahar and Edward Newman provide two important elaborations to Stedman's work on spoilers. Zahar argues against the implication that the classification of spoilers is permanent because spoilers can change their goals and level of commitment during the peace processes.[25] These dynamics often result from the actions of the intervening or mediating parties in the peace process. Newman highlights the fact that spoiling exists as an inherent component of

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[24] Stephen J. Stedman, "Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes." *International Security, Vol. 22, No. 2*, Autumn (1997), 5.

[25] Marie-Loie Zahar, *Contemporary Peacemaking: Conflict, Violence and Peace Processes,* ed. John Darby (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 114.

all peace processes and that all intervening parties should anticipate this phenomena and then calculate how much or to what degree the political situation can tolerate spoilage.[26] An example of this is the Al Qaeda car-bombing networks in Iraq that sow civil unrest within the state as a means to spoil the political process. They see the political processes at work in Iraq as incongruent with their own caliphate movement. However, the political process continues and therefore, for now, appears to have the capacity to endure these spoiling attempts. Understanding this allows third parties in Iraq to focus on other spoilers while attempting to contain the influence of al-Qaeda.

Finally, Stedman offers three ways to manage spoilers.[27] Parties to a peace process can often co-opt limited or greedy spoilers by buying them off, or they can socialize them into the peace process by offering political concessions. For total spoilers who cannot be bought off or socialized, parties to the peace process may resort to coercive measures. Examples of coercive management of spoilers range from killing them, destroying their military capability, to compelling them through the use or the threat of the use of force.

Third party military interveners must understand the relationship between spoilers and the conditions necessary for disengagement operations. This monograph's definition of military disengagement posits that a military disengagement succeeds when it accompanies the achievement of strategic goals and ensures that the conflict does not revert to a state that requires reengagement. The attainment of sustainable political reconciliation described previously offers significant assurance that the political aspects of the conflict that compelled engagement in the first place, will not require the continued engagement of the third party intervener in perpetuity. It follows that military interveners must manage spoilers if they seek to disengage because spoilers serve as key obstacles to political reconciliation within peace processes.

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[26] Edward Newman, *The Impact of Spoilers on Peace Processes and Peacebuilding* (Policy Report No. 2, Tokyo: United Nations University, 2006), 2.

[27] Stedman, "Spoilers Problems in Peace Processes," 12-13.

Military organizations possess unique abilities to manage spoilers. First, military organizations possess vast coercive capacity, perhaps even the monopoly on coercive capacity in a third party intervention. This capability offers a ready means of handling total spoilers and preventing limited or greedy spoilers from maneuvering to the total end of the spectrum. Additionally, military organizations possess critical intelligence capacity to identify spoilers and determine their goals and level of commitment. These capabilities serve as the minimum that a military intervener brings to the table, but does not imply that the military cannot or will not serve as the actual mediators in a peace process or provide the means to buy off or socialize spoilers.

An appreciation of operational context enables a force to understand the role of spoilers in the disengagement environment. Additionally, it can provide insight into how spoilers act within a violent context and how a lull in violence will influence their behavior. This understanding allows the intervening military force to develop spoiler management strategies.

Using the three concepts described in this section, this monograph posits that military leaders can formulate successful disengagement operations when they use an appreciation of the operational context to understand how to create and make use of lulls in violence, and manage spoilers. This hypothesis serves as the focal point of analysis in two case studies that follow. These case studies highlight how these issues assist operational level military leaders to influence the successful disengagement of military forces from third party interventions.

Case Study Methodology

To test this thesis, the monograph will investigate two case studies in military disengagement, and use them to determine the impact of appreciating the operational context to anticipate the role of violence, and spoilers on the conduct of disengagement operations. These case studies will reveal the relationship between these variables in two different circumstances.

To provide the most applicability to the U.S. military professional performing at the operational level of war, the cases selected passed the following criteria. The cases involve the

disengagement of U.S. forces from unconventional wars. The cases occurred without significant Cold War influence. This criterion supports future analysis in a multi-polar international order. This criterion supports what senior leaders and analysts predict to be the most likely form of U.S. military engagement in the future. As a necessity, the cases must offer the potential for research at the operational level of war. Additionally, the selection process favored cases that may involve U.S. military engagement in the future. Finally, to reveal the most applicable findings, the writer selected one case of a successful disengagement and another of an unsuccessful disengagement.

The first case analyzed is Operation JUST CAUSE, in which U.S. forces invaded Panama in 1989 to detain President Manuel Noriega and subsequently disengaged the invasion force from the state and its continued stability. The second case, Operation RESTORE HOPE, involved U.S. forces in an unconventional operation that included humanitarian assistance and counter-network, i.e., man-hunting, operations followed by a hasty disengagement and subsequent collapse of Somalia into its previous state of chaos. Additionally, the same generation of leadership and dominant operational doctrine reigned over both campaigns. This provides a reasonable amount of control on these variables.

The following chapters will provide case analyses of the military disengagements from these operations, an analysis of the hypothesis, and the implications of each on future operations.

Case Presentation

U.S. Forces in Panama 1989-1990

President George H.W. Bush ordered the invasion of Panama by over 24,000 U.S. troops on December 20, 1989. Addressing the U.S. Speaker of the House, President Bush declared that the U.S strategic goals for the invasion were: (1) protect American lives, (2) defend democracy in Panama, (3) apprehend Panamanian President Manuel Noriega and bring him in on drug charges,

and (4) ensure the integrity of the Panama Canal treaties.[28] U.S. Forces accomplished these goals, installed a democratically elected government, and terminated a long-standing National Emergency in Panama on April 5, 1990.[29]

The U.S. invasion, known as Operation JUST CAUSE, concluded a political crisis between the U.S. and Panama that lasted over two years. The first indicators of turbulence in U.S. Panamanian relations came in 1987 when Panamanian Defense Force (PDF) Commander, then General Manuel Noriega, began consolidating his power over the state by ousting a rival military officer, Colonel Roberto Herrera.[30] Noriega would continue to exacerbate tensions in U.S.–Panama relations with further political, military and narcotics activities for the next two years. Such events included election rigging, indictments including twelve counts of racketeering, drug trafficking, and money laundering, the annulment of the May 1989 election, and a declaration of a state of war between the U.S. and Panama in December 1989.[31] From the perspective of President Bush, this series of events provided the just cause for war that would become the namesake of the invasion operation.[32]

From its outset, the invasion of Panama presupposed the disengagement of invasion forces from Panama after the accomplishment of the military end state. In his report to the Speaker of the House, Tom Foley, President Bush reported that "forces would only remain [in

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[28] House of Representatives, *Communication from the President: Deployment of U.S. Forces to Panama.* 101st Cong., 2nd sess., 1989, H. Doc. 101-127, 2.

[29] House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Termination of Emergency with Respect to Panama.* 101st Cong., 2nd sess., 1990, H. Doc. 101-171, 1.

[30] Lawrence Yates, *The U.S. Military Intervention in Panama: Origins, Planning, and Crisis Management, June 1987-December 1989* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2008), 14.

[31] Eytan Gilboa, "The Panama Invasion Revisited: Lessons for the Use of Force in the Post Cold War Era." *Political Science Quarterly, volume 110 number 4* (1995): 539-562, 539; Myles H. Malman, "United States v. Manuel Noriega: Never Before, Never Again." *ABA Litigation Magazine*, Winter 2002: http://www.malman.com/Myles-H-Malman-in-the-News/United-States-v-Manuel-Noriega-Never-Before-Never-Again.shtml (accessed March 9, 2010); John Dinges. *Our Man in Panama* (New York: Random House, 1990), 304; and House, *Communication from the President: Deployment of U.S. Forces to Panama,* 1.

[32] House, *Communication from the President: Deployment of U.S. Forces to Panama,* 1.

Panama] as long as they must.[33]"Post conflict guidance came from an initial OPLAN called

ELABORATE MAZE, later Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY and did not include the occupation

of Panama by the U.S. invasion forces.[34] The Joint Staff History of Panama Operations recounts

the Commanding General of US Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) calling for the

withdrawal of invasion forces beginning as early as eight days from the initial invasion because

"the longer JUST CAUSE forces remained in Panama, the harder it would be to declare the

operations a success."[35] This emphasis on a rapid disengagement can also be attributed to the role

of GEN Colin Powell Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) and his emphasis on the

Powell-Weinberger Doctrine.[36]

This monograph previously defined a successful disengagement as one that accomplished

the strategic objectives set out for the military forces, and a post-disengagement situation that did

not compel the reengagement of that force. In the case of the U.S. invasion of Panama, the U.S.

accomplished all four of President Bush's strategic goals, and Panama has since enjoyed the most

democratic and stable period in its modern history. It remains a source of stability in Central

America. This case study analyzes the XVIII Airborne Corps and USSOUTHCOM appreciation

of operational context, and how they used it to manage violence and spoilers in Panama.

Operational Context

U.S. operations in Panama benefited from the fact that planning for military operations in

Panama began almost two years before their execution. The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) issued a

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[33] Ibid., 2.

[34] John Fishel, *The Fog of Peace: Planning and Executing the Restoration of Panama* (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 1992), 29.

[35] Department of Defense, *Joint Staff Special Historical Study: Operation JUST CAUSE, Planning and Execution of Joint Operations in Panama February 1988 - January 1990* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, December 1990), 96.

[36] Josh Dormont, "The Powell Factor: Analyzing the Role of the Powell Doctrine in U.S. Foreign Policy." *Gaines Junction: Undergraduate Journal of History* (Spring 2005): http://www.aidemocracy.org/news/05-04-gaines-junction.php (accessed March 11, 2010).

planning order to the USSOUTHCOM on February 28, 1988.[37] The planning that followed gained a full appreciation of the situation in Panama and an awareness of the cultural and strategic factors at hand. As previously discussed, an appreciation of operational context includes not just the environmental component, but also the logical component that nests the disengagement with the broader campaign. In the case of operations in Panama, the lack of logical context nearly nullified the appreciation for the environmental context because of procedural, structural, and organizational factors that affected the planning of Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY – the post conflict operation that would involve the success or failure of the disengagement.

Procedural errors occurred during the planning of what was at the time called Operation ELABORATE MAZE. Operation ELABORATE MAZE represented a phased campaign in Panama that started with a buildup of forces in a defensive posture called ELDER STATESMAN, an evacuation of U.S. noncombatants called KLONDIKE KEY, a possible offensive campaign called BLUE SPOON, and a post-conflict phase called BLIND LOGIC.[38] At face value, the phases all proceeded logically from one to the other as represented by U.S. Joint Doctrine's Notional Phasing model in Figure 1. However, the USSOUTHCOM commander did not order his Civil Affairs staff to develop BLIND LOGIC until the JCS had already approved all previous phases.[39] This indicates that the inherent need to shape the disengagement of U.S. forces from Panama escaped the planning that created the phases that would lead to disengagement operations.

The fact that the planners of the invasion and the disengagement did not have access to each other further exacerbated the disconnection of the invasion plan from the disengagement

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[37] Yates, *The U.S. Military Intervention in Panama, 31.*

[38] Yates, *The U.S. Military Intervention in Panama*, 89.

[39] Fishel, *The Fog of Peace: Planning and Executing the Restoration of Panama,* 7.

plan. This was because they were in different directorates at the time of planning and failed to interface and ensure their respective plans were properly nested.[40] This same lack of access, this time for security clearance reasons prevented other U.S. agencies, namely the U.S. Department of State and its embassy in Panama City from participating in the planning processes.[41]

Structurally, the misalignment of offensive plans in BLUE SPOON with post-conflict operations in BLIND LOGIC became permanent when the JCS ordered SOUTHCOM to break the various phases out of their single OPLAN format and consider each its own OPLAN capable of being executed in isolation of the others.[42] Joint planners now considered the collection of separate and distinct OPLANS as a set of OPLANS called PRAYER BOOK. Whereas the procedural factors that misaligned the related phases of ELABORATE MAZE could have been remedied in time by adequate staff oversight, this alignment was no longer deemed necessary as each phase now became a plan that stood alone. Therefore the two operations that would affect disengagement operation the most, offensive and post-conflict operations, could not be envisioned within a broad campaign context. There was no guarantee that one would logically support the other.

Additionally, organizational factors prohibited the adequate nesting of operations in Panama into an appropriate campaign context. The decision to hand further operational planning for operations in Panama to the XVIII Airborne Corps ensured that the emphasis for planning would remain with BLUE SPOON while BLIND LOGIC received short shrift.[43]

In the end, U.S. Forces disengaged during both BLUE SPOON, later know as JUST CAUSE, and BLIND LOGIC, later known as PROMOTE LIBERTY. Special Operations forces and elements of the 82nd Airborne Division disengaged shortly after the completion of major

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[40] Yates, *The U.S. Military Intervention in Panama,* 45.

[41] Fishel, *The Fog of Peace: Planning and Executing the Restoration of Panama,* 21.

[42] Yates, *The U.S. Military Intervention in Panama,* 89.

[43] Brian DeToy, *Turning Victory into Success,* 3.

operations. The 7th Infantry Division (Light), Military Police and Civil Affairs Units remained to conduct PROMOTE LIBERTY before finally disengaging. That U.S. Forces met all strategic objectives, and Panama today remains stable cannot be attributed to an appreciation for the logical alignment of these two operations and their ability to facilitate a successful disengagement. On the contrary, leading analysts of this conflict blame the rampant looting, vigilantism, and weakness of the PNP on the blind spots created by the incoherent way that these two operations came together.[44]

In summary, the apparent ease with which the invasion force disengaged was created despite a poor appreciation of the logical context of the operation introduces the possibility that two factors mitigated this oversight. The first is chance, demonstrated by inability of the PDF or any other actor to emerge as an effective spoiler during the brief window in which it was possible.[45] Second, and more likely, the appreciation of the environmental component of operational context provided enough of an appreciation to mitigate the XVIII Airborne Corps and USSOUTHCOM inability to appreciate its logical components. This second claim contends that the successful disengagement was not a fluke, but rather the resulted of an appreciation of the operational context that allowed the U.S. military to understand violence and spoilers despite structural and procedural incongruities in planning.

Lulls in Violence

The combat phase of the invasion of Panama, Operation JUST CAUSE, began on December 20, 1989. By 25 December, violence in Panama ceased.[46] To be sure, post-invasion Panama erupted into fits of violence ranging from looting, marauding, and last-stand firefights

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[44] Fishel, *The Fog of Peace: Planning and Executing the Restoration of Panama,* 175; Downie, "Taking Responsibility for Our Actions: Establishing Order and Stability in Panama," 75; Brian DeToy, 3; *Turning Victory into Success,* 7; and Yates, *The U.S. Military Intervention in Panama,* 270.

[45] Yates, *The U.S. Military Intervention in Panama*, 270.

[46] Defense, *Joint Staff Special Historical Study*, 95.

mounted by Noriega's PDF and Dignity Battalions, but these events were short lived.[47] The immediate cessation of combat and suppression of violence in Panama can be attributed to the overwhelming ratio of U.S. forces to PDF, the comprehensive disarmament of the PDF and the establishment of the Panamanian Public Force or National Police Force (PNP).

U.S. Forces in Panama totaled over 26,000 by the time the full combat force arrived.[48] Operational planning under USSOUTHCOM determined that this number of forces would be sufficient to both defeat the PDF and safeguard over 13,000 U.S. citizens in Panama.[49] This number dwarfed the PDF whose ranks included 18,000 troops, of whom only 3,500 were military forces (the others being police).[50] U.S. doctrine recommends a ratio of 3:1 when conducting an offensive operation. In this case, U.S. forces overwhelmed their military foes by more than double the recommended ratio, and achieved just under a 2:1 ratio against the entire PDF. Additionally, the mathematics do not account for qualitative differences between the forces. Because of their overwhelming numeric strength, U.S. forces achieved all of their invasion objectives and quickly fanned out throughout the Canal Zone, restoring a state of normalcy in less than two weeks.[51] PDF units suffered defeat, surrender, or disintegration.

Following the initial invasion objectives around the Canal Zone, U.S. forces systematically forced the surrender of all PDF units and facilities throughout greater Panama. During this later phase of combat operations, combined conventional and special operations teams surrounded and forced PDF units to surrender throughout the Panamanian interior.[52] The

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[47] David Behar, *Invasion: The American Destruction of the Noriega Regime* (Los Angeles: The Americas Group, 1990), 61-78.

[48] *Operation JUST CAUSE: The Incursion into Panama* (Washington: Center of Military History, 2004), 1.

[49] Defense, *Joint Staff Special Historical Study*, 6.

[50] Brian DeToy, *Turning Victory into Success,* 202.

[51] Edward Flanagan, *Battle for Panama: Inside Operations JUST CAUSE.* (Washington: Brassey's (US), Inc., 1993), 211.

[52] Defense, *Joint Staff Special Historical Study,* 71.

installment of the new civilian government under Guillermo Endara and his deactivation of the PDF complemented the tactical actions of the U.S. Army by strategically delegitimizing the PDF Forces associated with Noriega. The PDF no longer functioned as the source of resistance to both the U.S. forces and the new Panamanian government. Its defeat ushered in an initial lull in violence.

The overwhelming presence of U.S. Forces sustained this lull in violence initially and progressively handed it off to the PDF's successor, the PNP. Although hastily planned and executed, U.S. forces under the post-conflict OPLAN, Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY, created the U.S. Forces Liaison Group (USFLG) to oversee the creation of the PNP.[53] The U.S. Government immediately pledged over a billion U.S. dollars in aid to Panama, particularly to support the activation of the PNP.[54] Ultimately, the PNP proved just effective enough to sustain calm and normalcy in Panama but continued to rely on foreign assistance while Panama's government continued to develop.[55]

Through both overwhelming force, the systematic disarmament of the PDF, and the creation of a minimally capable indigenous security force, U.S. and PNP Forces created a lull in violence during the post-Invasion Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY. This lull in violence allowed the new government to assume power uncontested by the PDF, establish a minimally competent police force, and create a situation where civil society could participate in the new Panamanian order. Combined, these factors influenced the successful disengagement that would follow.

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[53] Fishel, *The Fog of Peace: Planning and Executing the Restoration of Panama,* 36.

[54] House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Proposed Consideration of U.S. Assistance to Panama.* 101st Cong. 2nd sess. February 6, 1990, 9.

[55] Richard Downie, "Taking Responsibility for Our Actions: Establishing Order and Stability in Panama." *Military Review* (April 1992): 66-77, 76.

Spoiler Management

As the primary obstacle to U.S. disengagement, the PDF served as the primary spoiler in post-Invasion Panama because its goals were inconsistent with those of the U.S. and the Endara. This stemmed from their historic role as not only a military actor, but also as the most influential actor in Panamanian politics. Under strict rules of engagement (ROE), U.S. Forces coerced some parts of PDF into submission while the Endara government socialized the others into the new system. All other potential spoilers managed to adapt to the new government's leadership without external motivation.

Since the 1940s, Panamanian military forces played a significant role in Panamanian politics.[56] In fact starting with the rule of General Omar Torrijos in 1968, military officers exercised de facto military rule of Panama for four consecutive regimes until 1989. During Noriega's de facto rule, he rigged national elections to place his puppet heads of state in power, marginalized the political opposition, controlled the media, expanded the size of the PDF, and fortified its control over all facets of the government.[57] Therefore, in light of their central role in the political leadership of the state and as an extension of Noriega's personal rule, the PDF became not only the source of military opposition, but the primary loser, and hence spoiler, in the new Panamanian order.

Operation JUST CAUSE defeated or disintegrated much of the PDF and its opposition during attacks on initial invasion targets. Noriega himself and his most loyal military units were the highest priority for U.S. forces to target – the elite Battalion 2000, the 1st Cavalry Squadron, and the paramilitary Dignity Battalions.[58] Mass resistance by PDF units ceased after the initial 24 hours of fighting. Noriega sought refuge in the Vatican embassy within 2 days. The final stand of

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[56] Thomas Pearcy, *The Military and Politics in Modern Panama* (Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Services, 1993), 15.

[57] Sandra Meditz, *Panama: A Country Study* (Washington: Department of the Army, 1989), 197.

[58] Flanagan, *Battle for Panama: Inside Operations JUST CAUSE*, 34.

PDF military resistance came from PDF Commander Lieutenant Colonel Del Cid who led a detachment of PDF in the Western province of Darien. Noriega's plan was for Del Cid to initiate a resistance movement from the jungle to assist Noriega's return to power in the event of a coup or invasion.[59] Using what came to be called the "Ma Bell approach," U.S. forces systematically surrounded these PDF units, offered them the opportunity to surrender, and when refused mounted an attack that compelled their surrender.[60] Del Cid surrendered on Christmas day, five days into the invasion. His surrender and subsequent pledge of loyalty to the Endara government marks the end of fighting in the U.S. Joint Staff History, and thereby ending the PDF's ability to spoil the development of the new government through conventional military means.

Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY involved, among many civil military operations, the creation of the PNP. The Endara government decided early on that the PNP should utilize the newly loyal remnants of the PDF as the core of the new PNP.[61] This relieved the Endara government of the dual problem of fielding an incompetent force that would face a newly disenfranchised PDF that was better trained at military tasks and seeking to spoil.[62] To quell the public perception that the former PDF thugs were now back on the streets, the Endara government refused to hire all seventeen of the PDF's Colonels, sixteen of nineteen Lieutenant Colonels, and 140 Majors and Company grade officers for their affiliation with the Noriega Regime.[63] None of the officers forced to resign returned to mount significant resistant to the Endara regime. At the request of the Endara government, the Catholic Church, an established mediator in Panama, held a mass for 300 newly appointed PNP members where the Archbishop effectively diffused much of the tension that existed between the former PDF, the Catholic

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[59] Ibid., 215.

[60] *Operation JUST CAUSE: The Incursion into Panama*, 40.

[61] Downie, "Taking Responsibility for Our Actions: Establishing Order and Stability in Panama," 67.

[62] Fishel, *The Fog of Peace: Planning and Executing the Restoration of Panama, 36.*

[63] House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Proposed Consideration of U.S. Assistance to Panama*. 101st Cong. 2nd sess. February 6, 1990, 29.

Church, and the Government.[64] The combined coercion of the PDF by U.S. Forces and their socialization by the Endara government proved sufficient to prevent them from spoiling the political process. It seems as though the seizure of Noriega, as the head of a very centralized organization caused the PDF, as a political and military actor, to fall like a house of cards.

Other potential spoilers existed but either failed to find a means to contest the new government or chose to socialize themselves into it. For example, political opposition to the Endara regime existed outside the PDF. Minority and lower class Panamanians felt that the Endara regime represented a return to the white elitist rule that ended with the assumption of military rule in 1968.[65] These factionalized groups, previously sympathetic to Noriega, failed to coalesce into a militant movement and chose to enter the political process. External states such as Libya, Cuba, and Nicaragua, who initially supported Noriega with arms and humanitarian supplies failed to foment any resistance in Panama. Finally, Colombia's Medellin cocaine cartel, known to have profited significantly from its relationship with Noriega, adapted to the Endara regime by maintaining its relationships with important banks and drug-trafficking organizations without the assistance of the central government.[66]

The quick suppression of PDF military resistance, incorporation of many of its trained service members into the PNP, and failure of other spoilers to realize their cause allowed the Endara government to stand up. In turn, this facilitated the rapid disengagement of U.S. forces.

U.S. Forces in Somalia, 1992-1994

Somalia collapsed into a violent civil war following the collapse of the Siad Barre regime in Somalia in 1991. During the ensuing chaos, various clan leaders formed militias and began to

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[64] United Press International, "Endara Hopes for a Speedy U.S. Pullout as New Envoy Arrives." *The Deseret News*, January 7, 1990: 16A.

[65] Meditz, *Country Study,* xxxiii.

[66] Peter Scott, *Cocaine Politics: Drugs, Armies, and the CIA in Central America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 73.

carve out spheres of control over the Somali state. The toll of noncombatant deaths due to violence, forced emigration, and famine shocked the international community.[67] The United Nations stepped into the Somali vacuum of order using a humanitarian-military intervention called U.N. Operation in Somalia I (UNOSOM I), authorized by U.N. Security Council Resolution 794 under Chapter VI of the U.N. Charter in April 1992.[68] UNOSOM I paved the way for U.S.-led Unified Task Force (UNITAF), authorized by U.N. Security Council Resolution 814 under Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter in December 1992.[69] UNITAF later transitioned responsibility for the intervention to UNOSOM II in May of 1993, under command of a U.N. Headquarters.

All three phases of humanitarian-military intervention involved the engagement of U.S. forces in the theater. The UNITAF mission defined by CENTCOM was to create the secure environment required for the delivery of humanitarian supplies into southern Somalia.[70] U.S. military operations ranged from humanitarian airlift operations, to military occupation. Ultimately, U.S. forces disengaged from the theater in 1994, leaving behind a collapsing U.N. force, an escalating civil conflict, and a dubious peace process. UNOSOM II forces disengaged in March of 1995 without reconciling the political conflict within Somalia or its concomitant noncombatant suffering.

Today, Somalia exists in a state of Hobbesian chaos that has offered safe haven for radical Islamic threats to both U.S. interests worldwide and commerce around the Horn of

[67] Oakley, Robert, *Somalia and Operation RESTORE HOPE: Reflections on Peacemaking and Peacekeeping* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1995), 24.

[68] United Nations. *Security Council Resolution 794*, UNSCR, 3145th meeting, U.N. Doc. S/RES/794 (1992).

[69] United Nations. *Security Council Resolution 814.* UNSCR, 3188th meeting, U.N. Doc. S/RES/814 (1993).

[70] Waldo D. Freeman, "Operation RESTORE HOPE: A USCENTCOM Perspective." *Military Review* (September 1993: 61-72), 64.

Africa.[71] The significance of the nexus of Somali chaos and terrorism warranted mention in President Barack Obama's war strategy speech at West Point on November 1, 2009.[72]

This monograph previously defined a successful disengagement as one that accomplished the strategic objectives set out for the military forces, and a post-disengagement situation that did not compel the reengagement of that force. Considering the persistent suffering of the Somali people and the emergence of Somalia as a threat to U.S. interests, the disengagement of U.S. forces in 1995 was a failed disengagement. What follows is an analysis of the failed disengagement in light of the operational context within which it was planned, and the way U.S. forces managed violence, and spoilers.

Operational Context

UNITAF forces failed to appreciate the operational context of its operations in Somalia, particularly its environmental component. UNOSOM II demonstrated an understanding of the environmental context but was unable to logically connect the proper means and ways accomplish its goals or to establish unity of command. Both failings contributed to the inability of U.S. forces to conceptualize and shape a successful disengagement.

UNITAF's mission required it to establish a secure environment in which humanitarian relief could reach those Somalis who needed it. This mission statement demonstrated a textbook application of the Powell/Weinberger Doctrine – that had recently been hailed in the Persian Gulf War – by providing the military with a definable, achievable mission with a clear end state.

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[71] Georg-Sebastian Holzer, "Assessing Somalia's Terror Threat," *International Relations and Security Network* (December 2009), http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Current-Affairs/Security-Watch/Detail/?ots591=4888CAA0-B3DB-1461-98B9-E20E7B9C13D4&lng=en&id=110116 (accessed April 12, 2010).

[72] President Obama, "Remarks at the United States Military Academy at West Point."

Unfortunately, the strict application of the Weinberger/Powell Doctrine allowed UNITAF mission to divorce itself from the reality of the operational context in Somalia.[73]

Famine and starvation became the prevalent symptoms of Somalia's primary problem – civil war along political-tribal lines. By focusing its mission on delivery of humanitarian relief, UNITAF ignored the political nature of the civil war, the lack of security in post-Barre Somalia, and the need for a third party to intervene in these matters. UNITAF disregarded the call for comprehensive disarmament and dragged its feet on the effort to train a national police force. In short, by enforcing the strict guidelines of their humanitarian mission, UNITAF refused to sign up for a long-term nation-building campaign. The point is that UNITAF's inability to see its mission in an operational context, as demonstrated by the narrow parameters of its mission and its refusal to deploy military police and civil affairs teams in significant numbers, demonstrates that it failed to understand and create the conditions that would ultimately allow US forces to disengage successfully.[74]

As UNITAF's replacement, UNOSOM II properly framed the operational context to include comprehensive disarmament, political reconciliation, and long-term nation building.[75] Unfortunately, the hasty nature of its transition with UNITAF, and the lack of commitment of coalition nations prevented UNOSOM II from establishing ample means and ways to achieve its strategic ends.[76] UNITAF executed a timely disengagement, leaving behind an undermanned UNOSOM II staff attempting to develop a campaign plan and establish the initiative in a deteriorating situation. UNOSOM II suffered a final blow when U.S. President Clinton announced the withdrawal of U.S. forces the following spring. Thereafter, various coalition

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[73] Jason Mims, former political-military analysis in the U.S. CENTCOM during operations in Somalia, interviewed by author, Parkville, MO, February 14, 2010.

[74] Jeffrey Herbst, *Learning From Somalia: The Lessons of Armed Humanitarian Intervention* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997), 9.

[75] *U.S. Forces Somalia After Acton Report* (AAR, Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, 2003), 25.

[76] Herbst, *Learning from Somalia*, 178.

nations followed suit, robbing UNOSOM II of vital means to perform its mission. Additionally, UNOSOM II HQ lacked unity of command over various units whose respective domestic leaders increasingly directed their activity.

Following President Clinton's announcement, the U.S. Department of Defense created a new headquarters, Joint Task Force Somalia (JTF-SOM), to execute the announced withdrawal. This headquarters too viewed disengagement outside of the unique operational context of Somalia. It viewed the disengagement as a single operation that combined tactical missions to secure port facilities and airfields with a logistics plan to redeploy U.S. forces and materiel.[77] JTF-SOM executed its mission superbly. However, by failing to understand Somalia's root problems, it failed to understand the roles of violence and spoilers in Somalia, and embarked on a military engagement from which it would be nearly impossible to disengage from successfully.

Lulls in Violence

U.S. forces experienced two lulls in violence during operations in Somalia. First, the arrival of U.S. Forces under the UNITAF banner, created a lull in the violence that had swelled during the civil war and continued unabated under UNOSOM I forces. UNOSOM I operated under the U.N. Chapter VI mandate that limited its use of force. Under a Chapter VII mandate, UNITAF seized several key cities, opened several lines of communications (LOC) and secured Humanitarian Relief Sectors (HRS) under U.N. control within a matter of weeks. On 28 January, the UNITAF commander reported that factional violence had been "neutralized."[78] The lull in violence occurred thanks to increased number of forces, the demonstrated ability of these forces

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[77] Robert F. Baumann, *"My Clan Against the World" - US and Coalition Forces in Somalia 1992-1994* (Fort Leavenworth: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2004), 189.

[78] Walter S. Poole, *The Effort to Save Somalia August 1992-March 1994* (Washington D.C.: Joint History Office, 2005), 33.

to escalate violence under the U.N. Chapter VII mandate, and diplomatic efforts that established a tenuous cease-fire between clans.[79]

The sustainable nature of this lull in violence remained doubtful. Special Envoy Robert Oakley engaged several clan, tribal, religious, and military leaders to negotiate a ceasefire in the lead up to UNITAF forces entering HRSs. However, these cease-fires accommodated humanitarian support but did not constitute formal peace processes.[80] Additionally, UNITAF forces refused to participate in comprehensive disarmament of clan militias. In the case of Mogadishu, UNITAF settled for the quarantine of "technical" (trucks mounting heavy weapons) to designated sites outside the city. Hence, the lull in violence existed, thanks to military operations; however, military forces did little to utilize this lull of violence conduct a successful disengagement. Options available but not selected at the time were the complete disarmament of warring factions, and the creation of a national police force. USCENTCOM considered these tasks unachievable or unnecessary dilutions of a clear mission.[81] At most, Special Envoy Oakley used it to implement a political track that initiated political reconciliation processes.[82]

Unfortunately, as promising as the political/diplomatic track seemed during UNITAF's operation and the lull in violence, in retrospect it was largely squandered during UNOSOM II operations. Warring clans, the primary aggressor being Mohamed Farah Aideed, used the lull in violence to bide time and jockey for legitimacy. Noting this, UNOSOM II leaders "personalized" the conflict with warlords by actively hunting Aideed. This eventually led to an escalation of violence, particularly in the Mogadishu and Kismayo areas.

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[79] Robert F. Baumann, *"My Clan Against the World",* 53.

[80] Jeffrey Herbst, *Learning From Somalia,* 129.

[81] Freeman, "Operation RESTORE HOPE: A USCENTCOM Perspective", 64.

[82] "General Agreement and Supplement Signed in Addis Ababa," January 8, 1993, *Addis Ababa Agreement Leading to the National Reconciliation Conference*.

The second lull in violence followed a cataclysmic event on 3–4 October 1993, when U.S. special operations and UNOSOM II quick reaction forces (QRF) waged a fierce gunfight against Aideed's militia in the streets of Mogadishu. Though recounted as a military catastrophe by U.S. and U.N. forces, the battle left Aideed "on the ropes" and his militia stymied.[83] However, UNOSOM II failed to exploit the lull to disengage. Again, comprehensive disarmament and the establishment of a national police force were the primary exploitation options available, but apparently declined by the CENTCOM staff. A subsequent U.S. announcement to withdraw forces from Somalia before the spring of 1994 undermined attempts by Envoy Oakley to rekindle peace processes.[84]

Two lulls in violence offered windows within which the U.S. and U.N. could have influenced disengagement by further influencing the political process and spoilers in Somalia.[85] However, both opportunities slipped away. In the first case UNITAF forces failed to ensure the lull was sustainable by enforcing disarmament, and fully committing to the training of a host-nation police force. Furthermore, they used this lull in violence to disengage the UNITAF headquarters (HQ) before UNOSOM II HQ became operational. Ultimately, this turned the peace process from one of potential conciliatory intentions to one of biding time against the U.N. In the second case, diplomats could not realize an opportunity to reestablish peace after the U.S. withdrawal announcement shattered the commitment toward the U.N. coalition.

Spoiler Management

The civil war that followed the collapse of Siad Barre's regime in Somalia involved several competing political movements. Most movements aligned themselves with various clans that were either favored or oppressed by Barre's rule. The goals of these clan-political affiliations

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[83] Bauman*, My Clan Against the World*, 169.

[84] House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Authorizing the Use of U.S. Armed Forces in Somalia*: Hearings on S.J. Res. 45, 103rd Cong., 1st sess., 1993, 1-28, 1.

[85] Oakley, *Somalia and Operation RESTORE HOPE*, 41.

ranged from establishing legitimate national power to securing the right of a clan to survive and thrive in its own territory. Superimposed on this system of political rivalry, Somalis aligned themselves along tribal and intra-Islamic lines. All of these factions played some role in the competition to establish power and security in a future Somali order. The arrival of UNOSOM and UNITAF forces created a new variable in the power equation in Somalia.

As Stedman describes, the various clan-political, tribal, and religious leaders saw the intervention and accompanying peace process as consistent with or a threat to their goals and interests in the Somali political order.[86] The intervening authority of the U.N. became the source for three things. First, it could provide or deny the legitimacy and empowerment of a faction by the way the U.N. interacted with its leaders. Second, its humanitarian relief supplies became a currency within the Somali economy. Third, by attempting to establish a monopoly on the use of force, U.N. forces provided security to the militarily weak factions while marginalizing the strong. In this new political environment, some factional leaders or warlords readily aligned themselves with the U.N. while others became spoilers.[87] Handling these spoilers provided a key way of enabling disengagement because of the role they played in exacerbating the conflict spiral in Somalia.

Coalition members in various HRS found different ways to handle spoilers. Despite being outside of its mandate, several UNITAF commanders established civic action programs to socialize factions into the post-intervention order or buy them off. The U.S. Marine Corps commander, COL Newbold, pacified spoilers and potential spoilers in the Baidao HRS by launching Project HAND CLASP, and Operation RENAISSANCE.[88] Both efforts brought infrastructure and medical assistance to the local leaders. The spoiler management efforts in

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[86] Herbst, *Learning From Somalia*, 5.

[87] Ibid.,11-12.

[88] Bauman, *My Clan Against the World*, 75-76.

Mogadishu soon eclipsed similar efforts across the theater when UNITAF and UNOSOM II forces determined that the struggle between Aideed and rival Ali Mahdi formed the center of gravity of U.N. operations.

Prior to the U.N. intervention, United Somali Congress (USC) turned on itself along sub-clan lines after it forced Barre's forces out of Mogadishu. On one side, the militarily powerful Aideed secured southern Mogadishu, while the weaker Mahdi held onto the northern portions of the city. Securing a cease-fire between these two leaders served as the first attempt by Envoy Oakley to manage these potential spoilers by socializing them into a peace process.[89] As the intervention progressed, Aideed and Mahdi manipulated the U.N. to gain legitimacy for their respective movements while exploiting the power that came with assisting the humanitarian deliveries. As Aideed's actions within Mogadishu became increasingly provocative, UNITAF and UNOSOM II targeted him as the primary spoiler to the peace process and turned to coercive means and ways to deal with him.[90]

UNOSOM II "personalized" attempts to coerce Aideed when the Security Council passed U.N. Resolution 837, calling for the apprehension of Aideed, and established a special operations task force, Task Force Ranger, to kill or capture him. Following the battle of 3–4 October, the U.S. DOD decided to terminate the manhunt for Aideed and revert to a policy of socialization to handle him as a spoiler. Envoy Oakley reengaged Aideed and even allowed him to use a U.S. State Department private plane to attend peace talks in Addis Ababa.

Despite the rekindling of the diplomatic track, Aideed, newly empowered by the U.S. announcement to withdraw, held fast to his desire for political power in Mogadishu and Somalia and remained a spoiler within the peace process. Not only did the inconsistent management of Aideed as a spoiler compel him to remain a spoiler, but as he continued to undermine U.N.

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[89] Oakley, *Somalia and Operation RESTORE HOPE*, 54.

[90] United Nations. Security, Council Resolution 837. UNSCR, 3229th meeting, U.N. Doc. S/RES/837 (1993).

credibility and coalition commitment, other actors within and outside the peace process became indifferent to it or became spoilers in their own right and encroached on U.S. disengagement to the end.[91]

In summary, this case demonstrates the correlation between a failure to establish a proper appreciation of the operational context and a failure to understand, and in turn, manage violence and spoilers.

Analysis and Implications

The previous discussion of disengagement operations and analyzed in two case studies demonstrates a correlation between operational context, violence, and spoilers. This section will provide an analysis of the thesis in light of the Panama and Somalia Case Studies and describe the implications for future disengagement operations.

Thesis Analyzed

The U.S. disengagements from Panama and Somalia reveal that there is a correlation between an appreciation of operational context, its ability to influence how a military organization manages violence and spoilers, and successful disengagement. In Somalia, U.S. forces redeployed under fire and left Somalia as unstable as they found it. The U.S. force's lack of appreciation for the operational context correlates to its inability to create or exploit lulls in violence when disengagement operations became imminent. Additionally, the inability of the U.S. or UNOSOM II staff to handle spoilers also ensured that various warlords would contest the presence of both in Somalia. Finally, a lack of appreciation for the operational context prevented U.S. forces from recognizing the fact that delivery of humanitarian aid alone would not create the lull in violence or reduce spoiler influence to the level they needed to disengage. In the case of Somalia, the simultaneous failure to appreciate the operational context, manage spoilers and

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[91] Jeffrey Gettleman, "Those Who Feed Off Anarchy in Somalia are Quick to Fuel It," *New York Times* , April 25, 2007, http://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/25/world/africa/25somalia.html (accessed January 8, 2010).

violence and the unsuccessful disengagement indicate a correlation between the two, though no causal mechanism is present.

In Panama, U.S. forces successfully disengaged. The overwhelming power of the U.S. invasion force quickly toppled the number one spoiler, the PDF, and eventually quelled the violent looting and marauding that filled the security vacuum left by its disintegration. Interestingly, this occurred despite that fact that USSOUTHCOM and the XVIII Airborne Corps failed to conceptualize the U.S. disengagement in an appropriate logical operational context. Again, we see a correlation between the elements of operational context, violence, and spoilers and the accomplishment of disengagement – in this case, the ability to do one correlates to an ability to succeed at the other.

In the case of Panama, however, an appreciation of operational context showed no correlation between the logical component of operational context and successful disengagement. This suggests that the logical component of operational context is neither sufficient nor necessary to a successful disengagement. Therefore, it may simply augment the more important environmental component of operational context. This is further evidenced in the Somalia case study where the logical components of the operation were valid but weak appreciation of the environmental components rendered the entire campaign and its disengagement unsound.

This point suggests that military organizations can effectively disengage from unconventional wars when they use an appreciation of the operational context to understand how to create and make use of lulls in violence and manage spoilers. Furthermore, the environmental components of the operational context are particularly important. Therefore, in future wars, military leaders should understand the mediating role that an appreciation for the operational context of the conflict environment plays. It allows military forces to understand how to create and use lulls in violence and anticipate the roles of spoilers in the environment.

Joint Doctrine depicts a cumulative campaign model in Joint Publication 3.0, Operations (see figure 2). This depiction demonstrates that each phase enables the following phase. To

clarify, in Panama, this implies that Operation JUST CAUSE would enable and shape Operation

PROMOTE LIBERTY. Likewise, the USCENTCOM posited that a short-term humanitarian

operation would enable and shape the eventual termination of the humanitarian crisis in Somalia.

Therefore, if as this monograph argues, U.S. forces will likely be utilized in situations from which

they will disengage, then doctrinally all operations that precede disengagement should be

conceptualized with that disengagement in mind. In neither Somalia nor Panama was this case. In

Panama, this failure has a positive correlation to the ultimate failure of the disengagement and

arguably created the confusion that led to mass looting and marauding that nearly disabled the
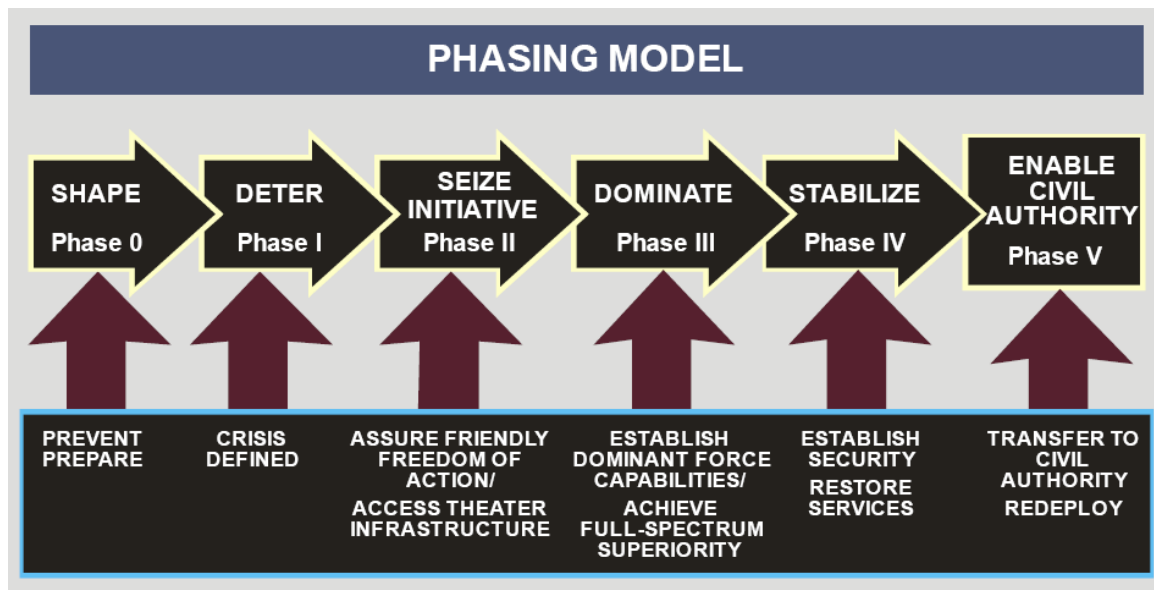
inchoate Endara regime.[92]

PHASING MODEL

SHAPE Phase 0	DETER Phase I	SEIZE INITIATIVE Phase II	DOMINATE Phase III	STABILIZE Phase IV	ENABLE CIVIL AUTHORITY Phase V
PREVENT PREPARE	CRISIS DEFINED	ASSURE FRIENDLY FREEDOM OF ACTION/ ACCESS THEATER INFRASTRUCTURE	ESTABLISH DOMINANT FORCE CAPABILITIES/ ACHIEVE FULL-SPECTRUM SUPERIORITY	ESTABLISH SECURITY RESTORE SERVICES	TRANSFER TO CIVIL AUTHORITY REDEPLOY

Figure 2 Phasing Model

Source: U.S. Department of Defense. Joint Publication 3.0 Joint Operations. September 2006.
Page IV-27. Planning, Operational Art and Design, and Assessment

These two cases also suggest that particular aspects of operational context, violence, and

spoilers that are important to understand when U.S. military leaders design disengagement

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[92] Fishel, *The Fog of Peace: Planning and Executing the Restoration of Panama,* 175; Downie, "Taking Responsibility for Our Actions: Establishing Order and Stability in Panama," 75; Brian DeToy, *Turning Victory into Success* 7; and Yates, *The U.S. Military Intervention in Panama,* 270.

operations. With respect to lulls in violence, the Somalia case study demonstrates that the way a lull in violence comes about matters. The lull in violence that followed the October 1993 Battle of Mogadishu resulted from a one sided *tactical* engagement where U.S. and Coalition forces defeated hundreds of Somali fighters loyal to Aideed. Aideed and his forces became temporarily incapable of spoiling UNOSOM operation. More importantly, the lull in violence emerged from a *strategic* defeat that Aideed exacted on U.S. forces. U.S. President Clinton's decision to disengage hastily from Somalia and assume a force protection posture left the U.S. forces little time or space to exploit the lull in violence. One can liken this event to the 1968 Tet Offensive in Vietnam where a lull in violence followed a tactical defeat of the Viet Cong. Again, little use could be made of this lull in violence because of the strategic effect of the enemy's initiative. The disengaging force should create the lull in violence on its own initiative.

With respect to spoilers, both cases indicate that managing spoilers includes not creating spoilers. The Somalia case study demonstrates how the mismanagement of Aideed ensured that he would become the primary opponent of the order that UNOSOM II was attempting to create in Somalia. The Panama case study demonstrates how the discriminate use of force to coerce militant spoilers prevents the creation of others when executed within strict Rules of Engagement. As an example, the technique used to force the surrender of PDF forces did not allow the use of force until PDF forces attacked or refused to surrender. If they refused to surrender, U.S. forces were required to conduct a demonstration to persuade them to surrender. Only if this failed did a coordinated attack ensue. [93] This not only ensured that the lower ranking PDF members that were not loyal to Noriega could be reintegrated to society, but it prevented unnecessary use of force that could harm noncombatants, and in turn convert them into spoilers.

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[93] House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Post-Invasion Panama: Status of Democracy and the Civilian Casualties Controversy.*102nd Cong., 1st sess., July 17, 30, 1991, see Malcolm McConnell's remarks and official statement.

The Panama case study also demonstrates a possible fourth spoiler management technique to Stedman's list that includes coercion, socialization, and inducement. His model implies that coercion is used when spoilers are irreconcilable and that coercion means killing or capturing the spoiler. The Panama case study demonstrates that coercion can compel a seemingly irreconcilable spoiler to become reconcilable when his only other option is death. The surrender of Del Cid serves as an example of a spoiler who did not need to be coerced so much as compelled. Though still a subset of coercion, compellance offers military leaders an alternative approach to coercion besides killing and capturing.

As a counterargument for the thesis, the case for better understanding disengagement operations stems from an assumption that future conflict will likely compel U.S. forces to conduct disengagements. However, in the case of a punitive campaign – such as the U.S. military campaign to capture Franciso "Pancho" Villa in northern Mexico at the beginning of the twentieth century – U.S. forces avoid becoming engaged as a stakeholder in the social, political, and economic situation, and seek only contact with an enemy. In such a case, no meaningful engagement exists to compel a subsequent disengagement. The possibility of such a campaign exists. Arguably, this is the sort of campaign that U.S. forces currently wage in Somalia and a critical component of U.S. Vice President Joe Biden's Afghanistan strategy proposal.[94]

Implications of Disengagement Operations

Disengagement operations, as conducted in the cases of Panama and Somalia, appear to bear a striking similarity to what the U.S. Army at the turn of the twenty-first century is calling counter-insurgency and stability operations. Drawing this conclusion mischaracterizes the nature of disengagement operations. Of note, military professionals did not consider Panama or Somalia

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[94] CNN, "CNN.com." *Key al Qaeda operative killed in U.S. strike, Somalia says.* September 15, 2009. http://www.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/africa/09/15/somalia.strike/index.html (accessed March 15, 2010); and Peter Baker, "nytimes.com." *Biden No Longer a Lone Voice on Afghanistan.* October 13, 2009. http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/14/world/14biden.html (accessed March 15, 2010).

a counterinsurgency or stability operation at the time. In today's parlance, military professionals would classify Somalia as a humanitarian relief mission and Panama as an offensive campaign. Regardless, in both cases, and in the case of today's wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, disengagement operations mark the closure of these campaigns.

Therefore, disengagement operations offer a broader construct within which U.S. forces may conduct various types of operations, the goal always being the extrication of combat power from an engagement and their return to a posture conducive to global military demand. As an example, the context of a particular operation may indicate that a stability operation may best create the conditions to disengage forces. Whatever the case, understanding disengagement compels strategic and operational leaders to understand how they will get out before they get in.

Additionally, one may conclude that the definition of a successful disengagement bears significant resemblance to the definition of victory. Again, this is a mischaracterization of disengagement operations. Victory contains subjective aspects. It is possible for two sides in a war to declare victory and be correct, as in the Persian Gulf War. Victory is therefore an amorphous subject. This monograph offers disengagement as a definable and measurable construct that, when compared to the construct of victory, allows military leaders the ability to better assess and plan the closure of military campaigns.

In *The Meaning of Military Victory*, Robert Mandel attempts to construct a definitive description of military and strategic victory (see Appendix A). Even if one accepts his definition, one can only argue that military victory may precede a successful disengagement but is neither necessary nor sufficient for a successful disengagement. As an example, the Iraqi Army suffered a defeat in the Persian Gulf War, yet accomplished its strategic objectives by not reengaging coalition forces, and resuming a posture conducive to maintaining domestic stability in the Shiite south and defense of its capital. The relationship bears no causal mechanism.

Much of the debate on the topic of disengagement occurs under the moniker "Phase IV" operations.[95] This term has its roots in the doctrinal reference that depict Phase III as major military operations, and all Phases thereafter rely on a lesser expenditure of military effort and significance. Using this term reflects the ambiguity that exists in contemporary understanding of post conflict operations. Other similar terms such as "winning the peace" or "operations after the campaign" reflect similar ambiguity, the latter further revealing the inability to fit disengagement operations into a broad campaign context.

Disengagement operations present a definable construct that can fill the ambiguous gap in military understanding and planning of operations that follow major combat engagements because it is likely to be the only constant in all future "Phase IV" operations. As correlates to successful disengagement, appreciating operational context, lulls in violence, and spoilers will continue to be relevant factors in disengagement operations. Understanding disengagement therefore may become the best way to lure military leaders away from their predilection towards Phase III and lack of preparedness for what follows. Anticipating disengagement operations compel these leaders to consider the ends, ways, and means necessary to return forces to their pre-conflict strategic posture before they become engaged.

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[95] DeToy, *Turning Victory Into Success*, 3.

APPENDIX A

A Review of Literature on the Topic of Military Disengagement

Literature

Literature covering military disengagement falls into two general categories, those that describe it as a component of war termination, and those that take a more comprehensive view. The former posit that war termination is achievable and sets the conditions for the disengagement of military forces from a conflict. They assume that war termination establishes a "clean break" for the military forces and therefore see war termination as the primary target for analysis, not military disengagement (the difference being that military disengagement is a technicality that follows chronologically after termination). The latter on the other hand, see war termination and a clean break as a sort of mirage or ideal that reality seldom presents. Literature in this category sees conflict as an enduring phenomenon that transforms but seldom ends abruptly and decisively. This would therefore create space for deeper analyses of how to anticipate, plan, or execute a military disengagement from an enduring but transforming conflict, but alas, so focused are these works on refuting those of the war termination camp, that they neglect military disengagement as a standalone topic of analysis. What follows is a sampling of both of these groups of literature and some insight on how they contribute to a definition of military disengagement.

Influencing both groups of literature, though belonging definitively to neither, Carl von Clausewitz expresses that "no one starts a war – or rather, no one in his senses ought to do so – without first being clear in his mind what he intended to achieve by that war and how he intends to conduct it."[96] In this same book, he expresses that the purpose of the military in the attainment

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[96] Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War* (Translated and Edited by. Michael Howard and Peter Paret, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 579.

of said achievement is the destruction of the enemy force in battle.[97] By bounding military

operations to the attainment of a fixed goal by way of military engagement implicates Clausewitz

into the war termination literary category because he seems to assume war lends itself to a clear

end-point and a limited role for the military beyond state-on-state conventional war.

However, Clausewitz offers equal support to a view of warfare more in keeping with that

of the comprehensive classification of disengagement literature. He reminds the reader that war is

changeable, its political objectives can shift and with it, the role of the military.[98] Furthermore,

the outcome of war is never final; the outcomes merely transform the landscape on which actors

compete.[99] The malleability of Clausewitz's theories on war surfaces in the juxtaposition of the

war termination and comprehensive categories of military disengagement literature.

Bearing the influence of Clausewitz, the prominent works of Fred Charles Ikle, Caspar

Weinberger, and Robert Mandel on the subject of war termination offer important insights into

military disengagement. *In Every War Must End*, Ikle demonstrates an adherence to the

Clausewitzian concept that all states embark upon wars with a goal in mind, though in his opinion

this goal includes not only national interests but also the personal or parochial interests of

statesmen. Though he advocates national strategies that plan for war termination up front, he

admits that strategic leaders seldom provide it.[100]

When you tease the disengagement material out of his work, you find a few relevant

descriptions of conditions conducive to military disengagement. First among them, he identifies

that one must coerce his enemy into becoming his friend, and then reform the government of the

former enemy.[101] Ikle's work does not include in its purview an explanation of how one can

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[97]Clausewitz, *On War*, 577.

[98] Ibid., 81.

[99] Ibid., 80.

[100] Fred Charles Ikle, *Every War Must End* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 1.

[101] Ikle, *Every War Must End*, xi.

affect these conditions, but it does contain one chapter on the possibility of military escalation as a means to establish the conditions for termination and hence military disengagement by forcing the enemy to capitulate.[102] Furthermore, if an escalation fails to achieve the criteria for war termination and in turn, disengagement, the state may face a "cut-its-losses" decision. In this case, the nation would have to disengage under suboptimal conditions.[103]

Secretary of Defense Weinberger attempted to codify Clausewitz's emphasis on war objectives in what the policy world dubbed the Weinberger Doctrine in 1984. In it, he advocated six criteria that predetermine the use of U.S. military power. Among them, a clear political objective, and continuous reassessment of the objectives and use of force indicated that he understood military disengagement to occur after the accomplishment of these objectives.[104] Though this describes how strategic decision-making drives disengagement campaigns, i.e., the National Command Authority can order disengagement with or without the accomplishment of initial objectives, it does not clarify how military professionals affect these campaigns. In essence, the Weinberger doctrine establishes a set of go-to-war criteria conducive to eventual disengagement.

Robert Mandel, in The *Meaning of Military Victory*, separates the concept of military and strategic victory, the latter setting the stage for war termination. He includes military deterrence of foes as a key component of not only military but also strategic victory. By doing this, he eliminates military victory as a condition for military disengagement and raises the bar for military involvement in a post conflict situation, even if it is limited to deterring threats to the emerging post-conflict order. He therefore ties military disengagement to other non-combat

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[102] Ibid., 42.

[103] Ibid., 83.

[104] Weinberger, Caspar W. "The Uses of Military Power" (Remarks before the National Press Club. Washington D.C., November 28, 1984), http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/military/force/ weinberger.html, (accessed October 12, 2009).

aspects of conflict such as political self-determination, economic reconstruction, and diplomatic respect.[105]

David Edelstein capitalizes on Mandel's concept of military victory while ignoring its complexity in his work on exit strategies from interventions. In "Exit Lessons," he explains that few exits strategies have mattered when the engaged military bungled its strategy of intervention in the first place.[106] Victory provides the best means of effecting a successful disengagement. A disengagement plan helps, but historically has not proven capable of righting a failed intervention. His emphasis on victory places him in the war termination camp while he also contributes to the comprehensive category of disengagement authors in his work *Occupational Hazards: Success and Failure in Military Occupation*. In it, he posits that occupying armies successfully disengage when the occupied territory establishes a viable government, structures that guarantee security – including a continued though limited presence of former occupation military elements – and a common enemy that unites both the occupying military and the occupied people.

Like Edelstein, several scholars place greater conditions on disengagement than military victory and war termination alone. John Ikenberry provides a bridge for disengagement theorists to cross over from the war termination bent into other considerations. In *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars*, he outlines three options from which a victorious army must choose.[107] First, a victorious Army can dominate the territory and people over whom it is victorious. Second, the victorious Army can abandon the territory and its people. These first two options would sit well with disengagement theorists who

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[105] Robert Mandel, *The Meaning of Military Victory.* London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006), 17.

[106] David Edelstein, "Occupational Hazards: Why Military Occupations Succeed or Fail." *International Security, Volume 29 No. 1*, (Summer 2004), 49-91, 89.

[107] John G. Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 51.

see warfare in more black-and-white terms. Third, the victorious Army can shape the post conflict territory and its people into a post war order favorable to it. This latter option introduces the enduring and transformative nature of conflict that makes disengagement so difficult. As Ikenberry points out, "states rarely finish wars for the same reason they start them." [108]

Andrew Terrill and Thomas Barnett further describe the enduring post conflict order as that of state building. Terrill conducted a historical survey of U.S. military interventions for the Strategic Studies Institute and summarized that post conflict power vacuums and crumbled states compel intervening armies to conduct occupations and state building operations prior to disengagement.[109] He accepts that such duties challenge the U.S. military, but highlights a historic lack of capacity for other U.S. agencies to contribute much to offset military inabilities in post conflict scenarios. Barnett remedies this lack of capacity by creating what he calls the "systems administrator" or Sys Admin Force.[110] This military force would specialize in managing post or pre-conflict situations such as occupation duty but would not be capable of military interventions or conventional warfare itself. However, this remedy introduces the potential to ignore the subject of disengagement because the existence of the Sys Admin force assumes that the costs of long-term engagement are acceptable.

Writing in 1958, Hans Speiers addressed the concept of military disengagement of U.S. forces from Europe in the context of Cold War. He described disengagement as having less to do with the termination of conflict, but more in terms of the result of iterative assessments of the costs and benefit of remaining engaged. He defines disengagement as a unilateral act when a military power disengages from an ally, or a bilateral act when a military power disengages from

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[108] Ikle, *Every War Must End*,

[109] Andrew W. Terril, *Precedents, Variables, and Options in Planning a U.S. Military Disengagement Strategy from Iraq* (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2005), 6.

[110] Thomas P. Barnett, *The Pentagon's New Map.* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2004), 148.

an enemy.[111] Offering no definitive reasons why such disengagement should take place or how other than through strategic assessment, his work serves this study as an example of how theorists have understood the concept of disengagement separate from war termination for decades.

Greg Brown and Lawrence Korb both apply Speier's concept of disengagement following strategic reassessment. In both cases, the authors posit that militaries must disengage when other elements of national power such as diplomacy and economic influence prove adequate to the task and/or other global requirements demand military assets tied up in lesser conflicts. Brown adds to this concept that a ratcheting back of military operations may be essential before other elements of national power can effectively engage.[112] Korb uses this concept to state his case for a U.S. disengagement from Operation IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF).[113]

It is important to recall that though several scholars engaged in debates about war termination or post conflict operations, they only contribute to a definition of disengagement tangentially. A definitive description of military disengagement therefore requires further study, in this case, a study of military doctrine.

Doctrine

U.S. military doctrine predominantly describes military disengagement through the lens of war termination, though the most recent doctrinal writing indicates that the U.S. military is beginning to assume a more comprehensive view of disengagement. Analyzing U.S. military doctrine chronologically demonstrates a conservative evolution from war termination to post-conflict stability influence on the subject of disengagement.

Written in 1997, Marine Corps Doctrinal Pamphlet (MCDP) 1-2, *Campaigning*, explicitly states that disengagement is a consideration of termination and likens it to other considerations,

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[111] Hans Speier, *Disengagement.* Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 1958), 2.

[112] Greg R. Brown, *Learning to Leave: The Preeminence of Disengagement in US Military Strategy.* Drew Paper No. 3 (Maxwell Air Force Base: Air University Press, 2008), 15.

[113] Lawrence Korb, "Strategic Redeployment." *Armed Forced Journal* (January 2006), 30-33, 33.

such as force protection, a transition to military operations other than war, and redeployment. The 2001 version of Joint Publication (JP) 1-02, *The Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, carries over an older definition of disengagement as, "in arms control – a general term for the proposals that would result in the geographic separation of opposing non-indigenous forces without directly affecting indigenous military forces." These two documents imply a very acute definition of disengagement as an act of separation between combatants.

The 2006 edition of JP 5.0, *Joint Operation Planning*, upholds the view of military disengagement as an aspect of termination operations by indicating that it often occurs at the end of joint operations. JP 5.0 outlines war termination in very black and white terms. It posits that political authorities decide "when and under what circumstances to suspend or terminate military operations. Once established the national strategic objectives enable the supported commander to develop the military end state, recommended termination criteria, and *supporting military objectives*.[114]" In this case, military disengagement implicitly falls into the classification of military objectives that support achievement of the end state.

U.S. doctrine reveals a Department of Defense predisposition for clear military guidance, exit strategy, and end state. The emphasis of these elements in doctrine reflects the Clausewitzian definition of war's primary aim being the defeat of the enemy army in the field and hence the influence of Clausewitz's theory on U.S. doctrine.[115] Doctrine therefore demonstrates a mild contradiction in that it defines disengagement in some publication as being a separation between combatants, yet in other doctrine, it describes disengagement as following victory (end-state), in which case there is no combatant from which to disengage from. Recent doctrine reconciles the complications that come with seeing disengagement in terms of end-state or termination.

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[114] Emphasis added

[115] William J. Gregor, "War Termination in the Age of Terror." *Biennial Conference of the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society.* Chicago (2007): 11.

The 2006 version of JP 3.0, *Joint Operations*, steers away from the Clausewitzian final battle and introduces the need to build post conflict capacity following military victory, and prior to war termination. Joint Force Commands (JFC) "should [terminate operations when] a legitimate civil authority has been enabled to manage the situation without further outside military assistance. JFCs may be required to transfer the responsibility of operations to another authority." JP 3.0 therefore sees disengagement and end state as contingent on factors other than military victory. U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 3-07 describes some of these contingent factors.

FM 3-07, *Stability Operations*, published in 2008, claims that supervising the disengagement of belligerent forces as an essential task in the context of stability operations, i.e., third party interventions. This involves reducing conflict to a level that the host nation can manage indigenously, and transitions responsibility away from the international and military communities to the local communities. This includes the development of host nation institutions and military capacity. FM 3-0's emphasis on post conflict stabilization reflects the same sentiments as disengagement theorists such as Ikenberry, Crane, and Zartman.

While doctrine is slow to change, the musings of senior military leaders often represent the dominant logic of military operations long before doctrine institutionalizes it. GEN James M. Mattis, Commander of U.S. Joint Forces Command, represented this break from past doctrine when asked about the end state of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF). He described end-state in more contemporary terms as an amorphous subject that can rarely be expected to be clear at the outset of an operation or remain unchanged throughout. The U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) further reflects this line of reasoning in that its missions in Iraq and Afghanistan endured long after military victory. Both operations reflect greater emphasis on disengagement being contingent on successful operations that take place after major combat.

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